

SUPREME COURT BILL.

at the inauguration of the new lecture rooms of the Manchester Athenæum, where he delivered a most eloquent address, to a delighted and enthusiastic audience. In the course of his remarks he dwelt upon the inestimable pleasures to be derived from the cultivation of literature by the man of business. The beautiful language of the Lord Chief Justice, which we make no apology for in part transcribing, calls to mind the picture of Mansfield after he had passed his eightieth year, tranquilizing his declining years with Cicero's *De Senectute*, or Tenterden in his old age, reading his Juvenal or Shakespeare, or writing Latin verses about flowers.

“Let it be permitted to one now rapidly passing into the decline of years to dwell emphatically on the solace and the blessing which mental culture and the appreciation of literary beauty afford to advancing years. Life passes rapidly away. The morning of youth passes, ere we are scarce aware, into the noon of manhood; and scarcely have we time to rejoice and exult in the maturity and vigour of manhood, when lo! the evening is at hand. The step ceases to be elastic, the exercises and pursuits in which we delighted become burdensome. Then it is that we become sensible of the value of intellectual pleasures—when we find we can still find enjoyment and delight in the intellectual treasures which they who have thought and written for us have bequeathed to us as a rich and glorious inheritance. No art, no skill can arrest the body's decay. Poets have fabled of fountains by bathing in whose waters youth might be renewed. A vain philosophy perplexed itself to discover the potent elixir by which the progress of decay was to be stayed. These were, indeed, idle dreams, but the freshness and youth of the mind may be kept alive long after the body has yielded to infirmity and age. In the continued cultivation of the intellectual powers, in the communion with the master minds of the present and past ages in the continued worship of all that is great and beautiful, sublime and holy in nature, in literature, and in art, intellectual youth may be prolonged, though the physical powers may have yielded to the withering influence of time. In these things is to be found the fountain in whose pure and vivifying waters the mind may find a well-spring of perennial

youth and preserve its freshness even in age. But I am wrong to occupy your time by dwelling on the advantages of intellectual culture as contributing to the enjoyment of life. They are summed up in a few words by the most accomplished man antiquity produced, of whose language the paraphrase I venture to place before you is but a faint and feeble echo. “These things,” says Cicero, speaking of the pursuits of literature, “nourish and strengthen youth; they are the charm and comfort of age. In prosperity they are fortune's best adornment; in adversity they become our refuge, and in affliction our solace. They delight us at home, they hinder us not abroad. They abide with us by night as well as by day. They are the companions of our travel, and when we retreat from the world the faithful companions of our solitude.”

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On the 23d of last month the Minister of Justice, at Ottawa asked leave to introduce a bill to establish a Supreme Court for the Dominion,—such a bill having been promised for the fourth time in the speech from the Throne.

At the very outset a difficulty is encountered, namely, to determine whether the Court should have jurisdiction in cases depending upon Provincial as well as Dominion laws. Upon this very material question there is a difference of opinion. M. Fournier holds that the Court will be able properly to exercise a jurisdiction in both classes of cases, and in this view he is supported by Sir John A. Macdonald. Whatever uncertainty may arise from the language of the British North America Act, there can be little doubt that it never was intended to circumscribe the authority of the Supreme Court by limiting its jurisdiction to Dominion laws only. The object was to substitute as far as possible our own final Court of Appeal for that on the other side of the Atlantic, an object consistent with the extension of our political independence which was to be looked for as the natural result of Confederation.

The right of appeal to the Imperial